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ABSTRACT

Sixty randomly selected College of Education Division freshmen from a major midwestern university were administered the Omnibus Personality Inventory (OPI) as they entered and exited their freshman year. Twelve of the OPI's fourteen factor-analyzed personality characteristic scales were used. For each OPI personality characteristic used, two null hypotheses were tested at the .05 level of significance--there is no difference between education freshmen entrance and exit mean scores, and there is no difference between education freshmen entrance and exit standard score standard deviations. The first hypothesis was not rejected for nine of the twelve characteristics. The three characteristics that demonstrated significant differences between entrance and exit means were autonomy, impulse expression, and practical outlook. The second null hypothesis was not rejected for all twelve OPI characteristics. Results indicate that the change in personality characteristics found in previous studies of college students over the four years of college occur in the freshman year. (Author/IRT)

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**COLLEGE FRESHMAN PERSONALITY
STABILITY AND CHANGE**

by

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COLLEGE FRESHMAN PERSONALITY STABILITY AND CHANGE

The ending decade of the 60's witnessed major research efforts to document whether a college education has an impact on college students. Major research efforts by Feldman and Newcomb (1968), Trent and Medsker (1969), and Chickering (1969), yielded consensus that college students, after four years of college attendance, generally become less prejudicial, more flexible, tolerant, liberal and autonomous, in their thinking and attitudes. Chickering, McDowell, and Campagna (1969), using student populations of thirteen (13) small colleges, noted similar student change during the freshman year. However, most groups they studied did not show change on scales of the Omnibus Personality Inventory (OPI).

PURPOSE OF THIS RESEARCH

Review of the literature indicated that few studies of college impact have been conducted on college freshman, and no studies were found addressing themselves to possible college impact on freshman majoring in education. The purpose of this study was to ascertain if education freshmen personality characteristics

remained stable or changed during the freshman year.

METHOD AND HYPOTHESES

Sixty randomly selected College of Education Division (CED) freshman from a major midwestern university were administered the OPI at entrance and exit of their freshman year. Education freshmen in this study completed a minimum of one course in education. The OPI is an attitude inventory developed at the Center for Research and Development in Higher Education at the University of California at Berkeley and published by the Psychological Corporation. The OPI consists of fourteen factor analyzed personality characteristic scales. The following twelve scales were used in this study:

Thinking Introversion (TI)

Theoretical Orientation (TO)

Estheticism (Es)

Complexity (Co)

Autonomy (Au)

Religious Orientation (RO)

Social Extroversion (SE)

Impulse Expression (IE)

Personal Integration (PI)

Anxiety Level (AL)

Altruism (Am)

Practical Outlook (PO)

For each OPI personality characteristic the following null hypotheses were tested at the .05 level of significance:

1. There is no difference between education freshmen entrance and exit mean scores.
2. There is no difference between education freshmen entrance and exit standard scores, standard deviations.

ANALYSIS OF DATA

The first null hypothesis was not rejected for nine (9) of the twelve (12) OPI characteristics. The following OPI characteristics were those which did not demonstrate significant differences between entrance and exit mean scores:

Thinking Introversion (TI), Theoretical Orientation (TO), Estheticism (ES), Complexity (Co), Religious Orientation (RO), Social Extroversion (SE), Personal Integration (PI), Anxiety Level (AL), Altruism (Am).

The three (3) OPI characteristics which demonstrated significant difference between entrance and exit means were: Autonomy (Au), Impulse Expression (IE), and Practical Outlook (PO). The null hypothesis was rejected for these three characteristics.

INSERT TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE

TABLE I
CED FRESHMEN OPI PERSONALITY CHARACTERISTICS
ENTRANCE AND EXIT STANDARD SCORE
MEANS AND 't' VALUES

OPI SCALE	DATE	MEAN	't' VALUE
TI	Entrance	42.650	.619
	Exit	43.100	
TO	Entrance	40.983	.255
	Exit	41.183	
Es	Entrance	50.250	-.441
	Exit	49.883	
Co	Entrance	47.550	1.106
	Exit	48.550	
Au	Entrance	50.817	3.328*
	Exit	53.400	
RO	Entrance	50.667	.357
	Exit	50.917	
SE	Entrance	50.650	-1.010
	Exit	49.800	
IE	Entrance	53.317	2.432*
	Exit	55.150	
PI	Entrance	50.033	1.324
	Exit	51.000	
Al	Entrance	48.867	1.030
	Exit	49.783	
Am	Entrance	50.667	-.379
	Exit	50.300	
PO	Entrance	52.467	-2.170*
	Exit	50.667	

*p < .05
n = 60

The second null hypothesis that there is no difference between entrance and exit standard deviation scores was not rejected for all twelve (12) OPI characteristics. This procedure was used to ascertain if significant shifts in score homogeneity or heterogeneity occurred from entrance to exit of the freshman year. No significant shift was demonstrated.

INSERT TABLE 2 ABOUT HERE

CONCLUSION

Most personality characteristics of education freshmen at the university studied remained stable from entrance to exit of the freshman year. These characteristics can be classified as intellectual, social, and religious disposition. These findings were similar to those of Chickering et. al., (1969) in their study of thirteen (13) small colleges.

Feldman and Newcomb (1969) and Trent and Medsker (1969) previously found personality characteristic changes of increased autonomy, increased impulse expression, and decreased practicality occurred over four years of college attendance. Results of this study of education freshmen indicated that this change occurred in the freshman year. It is important to note that these changes in freshmen were experienced in personal orientations while correspondingly their intellectual dispositions and social

characteristics remained stable. It has been suggested in previously identified research that students experience a growth moratorium in academic and social attitudes while personal oriented growth is occurring.

TABLE 2
CED FRESHMEN OPI PERSONALITY CHARACTERISTICS
ENTRANCE AND EXIT STANDARD SCORE STANDARD
DEVIATIONS AND 't' VALUES

OPI SCALE	DATE	S. D.	't' VALUE
TI	Entrance	9.335	-.135
	Exit	9.236	
TO	Entrance	8.829	-.861
	Exit	8.152	
Es	Entrance	8.953	-.341
	Exit	8.683	
Co	Entrance	8.633	.285
	Exit	8.877	
Au	Entrance	7.521	.933
	Exit	8.222	
RO	Entrance	6.806	1.863
	Exit	8.034	
SE	Entrance	8.203	1.366
	Exit	9.259	
IE	Entrance	10.084	-.535
	Exit	9.667	
PI	Entrance	8.585	.985
	Exit	9.255	
AI	Entrance	7.976	1.727
	Exit	9.492	
Am	Entrance	8.663	1.067
	Exit	9.612	
PO	Entrance	7.688	-.085
	Exit	7.058	

*p < .05
n = 60

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